



**Public Works
Hiawatha Facility
1901 East 26th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55404**

Frequently Asked Questions about Special Service Districts

What is a Special Service District?

A Special Service District (SSD) is a mechanism established by State Statutes and City Ordinances through which commercial property owners can pay for additional services above and beyond those that are provided by the City. It allows for property owners in a commercial area or business node to collectively fund for maintenance of special amenities and/or enhanced services.

Once established, a representative advisory board annually recommends to the City Council what services are desired and a recommended budget. The City Council then orders Public Works to perform the work, and the costs for the work is recovered by collecting service charges from the affected property owners on their annual tax statements. Typically Public works contracts for the services through a competitive bid process.

How do you establish a Special Service District?

Minnesota State Statute (428.A) states, "The governing body of a city may adopt an ordinance establishing a special service district." Minneapolis Code of Ordinances Title 17 governs the implementation of a Special Service District. Commercial, industrial, and utility properties are the only properties that are subject to assessment under the Minnesota Statute. These affected property owners initiate the petition to create the Special Service District. Other property owners may opt-in to join a Special Service District.

Who is responsible for the management and operation of a Special Service District?

The City Council appoints an advisory board for each SSD. Board members must be residents of the district or owners of property within the SSD. The advisory board makes recommendations to the City Council in connection with the operation and activities occurring within the district. The advisory board also is responsible for determining the assessment method and annual budget. Public Works then manages the actual service provision. The advisory boards and Public Works work together to monitor and evaluate service provision, and make adjustments for following years.

How much will a Special Service District cost?

It depends upon what services are performed. Service charges are based on the types of activities, frequency, and size of the district. Each Special Service District Advisory Board approves its own work plan and recommends an annual budget which is subject to City Council approval. Service charges are then assessed to individual property owners based on the assessment methodology. Examples of assessment methods include net tax capacity, gross building area, and linear frontage. Linear frontage is the most commonly used assessment method among Minneapolis' SSDs.

What are the potential benefits of a Special Service District?

It is one way that business nodes or commercial corridors can come together to collectively create a common level of basic maintenance services. A key benefit of SSDs is that desired services are delivered in a consistent manner, and all qualified property owners will pay their fair share. Services could include safety services, cleaning, snow management, marketing and promotions, seasonal decorations, and maintenance of public spaces.

Where are the existing Special Service Districts located in Minneapolis?

There are sixteen SSDs including the Minneapolis Downtown Business Improvement District Special Service District, commonly called the Downtown Improvement District or DID in Minneapolis. The map shows the location of each district.

May 18, 2009

May 18, 2009

Base Map Date
March 24, 2009

Mayor: R.T. Rybak
City Council:

Ward 1	Paul Ostro
Ward 2	Cam Gordon
Ward 3	Diana Hoffsta
Ward 4	Barbara Johnson
Ward 5	Don Sam's
Ward 6	Robert Lillgren
Ward 7	Les Goodman
Ward 8	Elizabeth Christen
Ward 9	Gary Sch
Ward 10	Ralph Kensington
Ward 11	Scott Benson
Ward 12	Sandra Colvin Roy
Ward 13	Betsy Hodges

1. Bloomington-Lake
2. Central Avenue
3. Chicago Avenue South
4. Chicago-Lake
5. Dinkytown
6. East Lake Street
7. Franklin Avenue East *
8. Hennepin Theater District
9. Linden Hills
10. Lyndale-Lake
11. Nicollet Avenue South
12. Riverview *
13. South Hennepin Avenue
14. Stadium Village
15. Uptown
16. Downtown Improvement District

* = Not Active

Ⓐ = Proposed District Expansion

Ward Boundary (#)

